



## **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES: MADISON COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER**

Approved by the County Administrator: July 1, 2008

### **I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- a. Operation as a Pound. The County's animal pound consists of facilities operated by the County for the purpose of impounding or harboring seized, stray, homeless, abandoned or unwanted animals, known to the public as the "Madison County Animal Shelter."
  - i. Primary oversight of pound operations shall be the responsibility of the County's Facilities Director.
  - ii. Day-to-day operations of the pound shall be the responsibility of the County's Animal Control Officers, under the supervision and direction of the Facilities Director.
- b. Governing Laws and Regulations.
  - i. This facility shall be operated and maintained in accordance with applicable laws and regulations governing operation of a pound, specifically:
    - 1. Virginia Code, Title 3.1, Chapter 27.4
    - 2. Virginia Administrative Code 2 VAC 5-11—10 through 2 VAC 5-110110
    - 3. Madison County Animal Control Ordinance (October 4, 2006), as it may be amended from time to time
  - ii. In the event staff has questions about whether a particular circumstance or practice meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations, staff shall present the questions to the Animal

Control officers, and the animal control officers shall contact the Facilities Director for any assistance that may be necessary.

c. Definitions. For purposes of this policy:

The term “*adoption*,” for purposes of this policy, means the transfer of a dog or cat, or any other companion animal, from the possession of the County or a releasing agency to an individual, under circumstances where that individual becomes the rightful owner of the animal.

The term “*animal*” does not include agricultural animals;

The term “*releasing agency*,” as used in this policy, refers to a humane society, animal welfare organization, and society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, or another similar entity or home-based rescue, which releases animals for adoption.

The term “*rightful owner*” means a person with a legal property right in an animal

*Other terms.* Other terms, where they appear in Va. Code §3.1-796.66, shall have the meanings set forth in that Code section.

- d. Hours Open to the Public. The facility shall be accessible to the public at reasonable hours. Hours shall be posted on signs located on the gate at the entrance to the pound, and at the front door to the office.
- e. Required Statements. Every staff member providing care or working at the facility shall provide a signed, written statement certifying that he or she has never been convicted of animal cruelty, neglect or abandonment. This statement shall be maintained in a file at the facility and each staff member shall be advised of his or her obligation to update the statement as changes occur.
- f. Record-keeping: information and inquiries about specific animals.
- i. Staff shall maintain written records of information received from any humane society, animal welfare society, society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, or similar organization, regarding specific companion animals. Any such information shall be maintained for a period of 30 days from the date received.

- ii. Staff shall maintain written records regarding animals released for adoption, for a period of at least 30 days.
  - iii. Staff shall maintain written records of contacts with individuals who have found a companion animal and who are providing care or safekeeping of that animal. These written records shall be kept for a period of 30 days from the date on which the information is received. The records shall include the following information:
    - 1. Name and a contact telephone number of the person who is holding the animal;
    - 2. A description of the animal, including information from any tag, license, collar, tattoo or other identification or markings; and
    - 3. The location where the animal was found.
  - iv. If a person contacts the pound inquiring about a lost companion animal, staff shall advise the person (i) if the companion animal is confined at the pound, or (ii) if a companion animal of similar description is confined there. Staff shall also check its records maintained and provide the person with any other information that it may have regarding the lost companion animal, or animals fitting that description. Upon request, a person inquiring about a lost companion animal shall be allowed to view the pound's written records containing information about companion animals that have been found or that have been placed for adoption.
- g. Record-keeping, generally.
- i. *Custody*--Staff shall maintain an animal custody record for each of the animals received into the pound. In addition, staff shall keep detailed, written records of the disposition and euthanasia of individual animals.
  - ii. *Data required for State Report*--Staff shall keep and maintain records and information sufficient to complete the annual Animal Record Summary Report required by the Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. This annual report shall be filed with the state no later than January 15 each calendar year.
  - iii. *Monthly Staff Report*—The Animal Control Officers shall provide the Facilities Director and County Administrator with a monthly Animal Record Summary Report. This monthly report shall be submitted on or before the 5<sup>th</sup> day of each calendar month, for the preceding calendar month.

- iv. *Inventory*--On or before January 31 of each year staff shall take inventory of all equipment and supplies stored at the pound. This inventory shall be reviewed and updated on a monthly basis.
  - v. *Records of donations*--Staff shall keep a record of cash, equipment and supplies donated by specific individuals or organizations, including the date on which the donation was made, the nature, quantity and condition of the equipment or supplies, and the name of the donor. Each month, donations of equipment and supplies shall be incorporated into the ongoing inventory.
  - vi. *Cash management*—Staff shall keep a daily record the amount of cash and checks received, the names of the individuals from whom it's taken, and the purpose (e.g., donation, or adoption payment). Staff shall provide individuals with receipts for cash taken in. Staff shall store cash and checks on hand in a secure, locked location. Cash and checks shall be promptly deposited with the County Treasurer, no less frequently than once per week.
  - vii. *Adoption resources*. Staff shall keep a current list of individual volunteers and animal welfare organizations willing to assist with locating appropriate adoptive placements for animals. It is the policy of the County to find good homes for as many animals as possible. Toward that end, staff will welcome and seek out assistance from all appropriate resources.
- h. Required holding periods.
- i. An animal received at the pound shall be kept for a minimum of five (5) days, commencing on the day *following* the day the animal is initially confined (unless the animal is sooner claimed by its rightful owner).
  - ii. Upon receiving an animal into the pound, staff shall determine whether the animal has a collar, tag, license, tattoo, or other form of identification. If such identification is found on the animal, it shall be held for a minimum of least ten (10) days, commencing on the day *following* the day the animal is initially confined (unless the animal is sooner claimed by its rightful owner). If identification is found, staff shall make a reasonable effort to notify the owner of the animal's confinement within 48 hours following the day of initial confinement.
  - iii. If an animal confined in the pound has not been claimed upon expiration of the required holding period, then (a) it will be deemed abandoned and will become the property of the County, and (b) staff shall promptly arrange for disposition of the animal

through one of the alternatives set forth within subparagraph (i), following below.

- iv. Nothing in this section shall preclude staff from arranging for the euthanasia or other disposition of animals prior to the required holding period, under the following circumstances:
  - 1. A critically injured, critically ill, or un-weaned animal may be immediately euthanized for humane purposes;
  - 2. An animal whose owner has read and signed a statement surrendering all property rights may be immediately euthanized or disposed of, if the owner in his or her written statement has acknowledged that this may take place.
  - 3. Feral dogs or cats not bearing any collar, tag, tattoo or other form of identification, may be euthanized after being kept for at least three (3) days (one of which must be a full business day) if:
    - a. The feral dog or cat exhibits behavior that poses a risk of physical injury to any person confining the animal, and
    - b. The risk is documented in a written statement of a disinterested person (the disinterested person must be someone other than a person releasing or reporting the animal)
- i. Disposition of animals. Upon expiration of the required holding period, staff shall promptly arrange one of the following dispositions for an animal:
  - i. *Foster care.* Placement of the animal in a foster home, if the foster care provider meets the requirements of Va. Code §§3.1-796.68 and 3.1-796.96:6 and the provider signs a written statement specifying that he or she has never been convicted of animal cruelty, neglect or abandonment;
  - ii. *Transfer of custody.* Transfer of custody of the animal to:
    - 1. a releasing agency within the Commonwealth of Virginia, if the agency has provided staff with the written statements required by Va. Code §3.1-796.96(C)(1); or
    - 2. to a releasing agency located in and lawfully operating under the laws of another state, if that releasing agency meets the requirements of Virginia Code §3.1-796.96(C)(5), for purposes of adoption or euthanasia only;
    - 3. Each transfer of an animal to a releasing agency shall be documented by a written agreement. An animal transferred to a releasing agency shall be immediately removed from

the pound premises by the agency; however, case-by- case exceptions may be made if the releasing agency is willing to enter into a written agreement that sets forth in detail the terms and conditions under which the animal will remain on the premises of the pound, including a specific date on which the releasing agency will be required to remove the animal from the premises.

- iii. *In-county adoption.* Adoption of the animal by a resident of Madison County (a) who pays the required license fee, and (b) who signs a written statement specifying that he or she has never been convicted of animal cruelty, neglect or abandonment;
- iv. *Other adoption.* Adoption of the animal by any other person who (a) signs a written statement specifying that he or she has never been convicted of animal cruelty, neglect or abandonment, and (b) pays the costs of a pre-adoption sterilization of the animal; or
- v. *Euthanasia.* Euthanasia, when utilized, shall be performed in accordance with lawful and humane procedures.

## **II. ANIMAL HOUSING; CARE; DISPOSITION**

### **a. Shelter Capacity:**

- i. The maximum number of dogs that may be sheltered at the pound (i.e., indoor cages or confinement areas) at any one time is:
  - 1. 18 dogs, within indoor confinement areas with outdoor runs; and
  - 2. 4 dogs, within the indoor cages reserved for animals under observation;
  - 3. 3 litters of puppies, within the indoor “puppy space” cages; and
  - 4. An additional number of dogs as may lawfully be sheltered in the pound’s outdoor confinement areas consistent with the standard of care required by state law and regulations.
- ii. The maximum number of cats that may be sheltered at the pound at any time is 35.
- iii. There shall be no animal cages within the office area, except temporarily during brief periods when an animal is being received into or transferred out of the pound.

- iv. No animal cages shall be placed in any location(s) that would block any drain, air vent, window or any entrance/exit to the building.
  - v. Outdoor enclosures shall not be used as the primary confinement area for any dogs during periods of weather or temperature extremes.
- b. Care of Animals. Every companion animal on the premises of the pound shall be provided with the following:
- i. Adequate food, which means food: that
    1. is of sufficient quantity and nutritive value to maintain each animal in good health;
    2. is accessible;
    3. is prepared so as to permit ease of consumption for the age, species, condition, size and type of animal;
    4. is provided in a clean and sanitary manner;
    5. is placed so as to minimize contamination by excrement and pests; and
    6. is provided at suitable intervals for the species, age and condition of the animal, but at least once daily, except as prescribed by a veterinarian or as dictated by naturally occurring states of hibernation or fasting normal for the species.
  - ii. Adequate water, which means:
    1. Every animal shall be provided with clean, fresh, potable water of a drinkable temperature. Water shall be provided in sufficient volume, and at suitable intervals, but at least once every 12 hours, to maintain normal hydration for the age, species, condition, size and type of animal, except: (i) as may otherwise be provided by a veterinarian, or (ii) as dictated by naturally occurring states of hibernation or fasting normal for the species.
    2. Water shall be provided to animals in confinement areas by use of automatic watering devices, or non-toxic water bowls that are secured in a fixed position or a type that cannot be tipped over by the animal. Water receptacles must be clean and accessible to each animal, and shall be placed so as to minimize contamination of the water by excrement and pests.

- iii. Adequate shelter, which means shelter that
  - 1. is suitable for the species, age, condition, size and type of each animal;
  - 2. is safe and protects each animal from injury, rain, sleet, snow, hail, direct sunlight, the adverse effects of heat or cold;
  - 3. physically enables each animal to be clean and dry, except when detrimental to the species;
  - 4. for dogs and cats, provides a solid surface, resting platform, pad, floor mat or similar device that is large enough for the animal to lie on in a normal manner and can be maintained in a sanitary manner;
  - 5. Additional specifications for cages and enclosures:
    - a. Cages must be made of stainless steel, fiberglass, heavy galvanized metal, galvanized wire or equivalent, and shall have solid bottoms.
    - b. Pallets or resting boards made of non-porous materials shall be provided, so that animals can rest or sleep off the floor.
    - c. Blankets made of porous materials shall be removed and either replaced or laundered at least once per day.
    - d. Solid wastes shall be removed from animal cages and enclosures and with sufficient frequency to keep the enclosures clean, dry and sanitary for the animals; and
  - 6. All cages and enclosures shall provide adequate space for each animal contained therein.
  - 7. "Adequate space" means space sufficient to allow each animal to:
    - a. easily stand, sit, lie, turn about, and make all other normal body movements in a comfortable, normal position for the animal, and
    - b. interact safely with other animals in the same cage or enclosure.
    - c. When an animal is tethered, "adequate space" refers to a tether that permits the above-referenced actions and that is appropriate to the age and size of the animal; that is attached to the animal by a properly applied collar, halter, or harness configured so as to protect the animal from injury and prevent the animal or tether from becoming entangled with



other objects or animals, or from extending over an object or edge that could result in the strangulation or injury of the animal, and that is at least three times the length of the animal, as measured from the tip of its nose to the base of its tail.

- d. When freedom of movement would endanger the animal, temporarily and appropriately restricting the movement of the animal according to professionally accepted standards for the species is considered adequate space.
- iv. Adequate exercise, which means an opportunity for an animal to move, sufficient to maintain normal muscle tone and mass for the age, species, size and condition of the animal.
- v. Adequate care and treatment, as those terms are defined within Va. Code §3.1-796.66, including veterinary treatment when needed or to prevent suffering or disease transmission.
  - 1. Upon being received into the pound, animals which are unlikely to be euthanized immediately at the end of the required holding period shall be promptly de-wormed and vaccinated, as appropriate for their age and type of animal.

### **III. DISPOSITION OF SOLID WASTES AND DEAD ANIMALS**

- a. Dead Animals. Un-refrigerated dead animals shall be disposed of within 24 hours by off-site burial, incineration or other methods acceptable to the Department of Health.
- b. Disposal of Solid Wastes. Disposal of all solid wastes shall meet the requirements of applicable federal and state laws and local ordinances

### **IV. EUTHANASIA**

- a. Delivery. No person(s) other than a licensed veterinarian shall euthanize any animal at the pound.
- b. Drug Storage. No drugs for euthanasia shall be stored at the pound.

### **V. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

- a. Food preparation and storage

- i. Bins used to store food shall be constructed of materials that protect against infestation by insects and rodents
  - ii. Food shall not be stored directly on the floor or on the ground, but shall be placed on shelves or pallets a minimum of 12 inches above the ground or floor, or in bins on rollable coasters.
  - iii. Perishable food shall be refrigerated or promptly disposed of.
  - iv. Equipment and utensils used in the preparation and serving of food to animals shall be made of materials which are easily cleanable, non-corrosive and non-toxic
  - v. Food not eaten by animals in outside enclosures shall be promptly removed so as not to attract insects, rodents or other pests.
- b. Isolation and observation area
  - i. There shall be an area marked and maintained as an isolation area for incoming animals that are ill, or suspected of being ill. Such animals will be confined in the isolation area for a minimum of 48 hours.
- c. Confinement areas
  - i. Cages and confinement areas shall be cleaned at least once daily with disinfectants or germicidal agents
- d. Maintenance of Building; Air Circulation Systems
  - i. Filters for appliances and air circulation systems shall be changed in accordance with manufacturers' schedules.
  - ii. Staff shall follow the requirements of the County's Facilities Director as to maintenance of the buildings, grounds, facilities and equipment of the pound.
- e. Grounds upkeep, generally:
  - i. There shall be no outside storage of any food
  - ii. There shall be no storage of equipment or supplies except within the main building or an accessory storage building.
  - iii. All accumulated waste, rubbish and trash shall be stored in covered containers outside the main building, in a designated location. The contents of the covered containers shall be taken to the transfer station at least once daily.
  - iv. Staff shall keep the exterior grounds free of accumulations of litter and trash. Paved parking lot surfaces, and other impervious ground surfaces open to the public shall be kept broom-clean at all times.

## **VI. MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRANSPORTATION OF ANIMALS**

- a. Operation of County-Owned Motor Vehicles.
  - i. No person other than a County employee shall be permitted to operate a County-owned motor vehicle assigned to the pound. No

County employee shall be allowed to operate a County-owned motor vehicle assigned to the pound. Any employee who is authorized to operate a County-owned motor vehicle must have a valid driver's license and insurance coverage. It shall be the responsibility of the animal control officers to obtain documentation of an employee's license and proof-of-insurance prior to allowing any employee to operate a County-owned vehicle.

- ii. No County-owned motor vehicle assigned to the pound shall be used for any purposes other than official County business.

**b. Transportation of Animals**

- i. When transporting any animal, no staff member shall allow the animal to be confined in any type of conveyance for more than 24 consecutive hours without being exercised, properly rested, fed and watered, as necessary for that particular type and species of animal. A reasonable extension of this time is permitted when an accident, storm or other act of God causes a delay.
- ii. Adequate space in the primary enclosure within any type of conveyance shall be provided for each animal being transported.

**c. Reserved.**

**VII. AMENDMENTS OF POLICY**

- a. This Standard Operating Procedure may be amended from time to time by the County Administrator.
- b. The effective date of this SOP is July 1, 2008.